

MUCH BIRCH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of Much Birch Parish Council held at the Much Birch Community Hall on Thursday 7th October 2021 from 7.30 pm

Present:

Cllr Alison Cook (Chair)
Cllr Roisin Burge
Cllr David Baldwin
Cllr Chris Pickering-Grey
Cllr Joseph Goldsmith

In attendance:

Parish Clerk; Alison Wright and Lengthsman; Paul Wright plus Ward Cllr Toni Fagan

Open Session:-

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no comments during the Open Session which closed at 7.31 pm.

1.0 Apologies for Absence

There were apologies received from Cllr A Crum.

2.0 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

3.0 Minutes of previous meeting

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting, held at the Much Birch Community Hall on the 2nd September 2021, were approved as a true and correct record of the Meeting.

4.0 Reports

4.1) P.C.S.O. from West Mercia Police

Golden Valley Briefing - October Newsletter received.

Introduction by West Mercia Police Herefordshire RABO Mark Stokes

4.2) Ward Councillor Ward Cllr Toni Fagan had circulated the Leaders report and other information. Cllr Fagan updated the meeting regarding grants for Covid 19 recovery, improving health and getting people back on track mentally and emotionally. There was a big emphasis on things for young people, possible youth representative on parish councils? Objective was to provide activities, green spaces, identify projects and build them up. There were grants for matters related to climate change and ecological restoration plus information about sustainable transport schemes. There were more details on decarbonisation. Talk Community were very active in the county and were circulating information. Setting up of Hubs was taking place and IT matters were an important aspect as knowledge of how to use IT equipment was important in order for people not to be so isolated. IT awareness funding was available. Planning Services were overloaded with work and were experiencing staff shortages. The Ward Cllr said that "Enforcement was very difficult at the present." Planning Officers were not being allocated to application consultations until later in the process but the Ward Cllr urged that comments should still be submitted and people were not to be daunted by the deadlines. There was a discussion about some topical issues regarding hedges and retrospective planning applications. There was also an update about the work of "Verging on Wild" who were trying to improve the bio-diversity in the counties verges.

4.3) Locality Steward

James Howells Locality Steward has sent his bulletins.
Also amended Locality Stewards Map
Communication re grit/salt supply

5.0) Update on Correspondence
Correspondence from Herefordshire Council

Herefordshire Council:
Parish Precepts – request for 2022 – 2023 information on amount required
ROAD CLOSURES - OCTOBER - 30.09.2021
Talk Community Newsletter 24 September 2021

6.0 Financial Report

6.1) The following bank balances were noted:

@ 13 th Sept 2021 HSBC Community Account	£10,407.94
@ 13 th Sept 2021 HSBC Community Projects Account	£6,596.84

6.2) To approve list of payments (circulated separately)

The following payments were approved:

Payments to be made from main account

Clerk paid in accordance with contract for October	
HM Revenue & Customs (tax)	£79.40
Longfield Services (Lengthsman and sign fitting)	£145.00
Skyfire Consulting Ltd (web services)	£101.54

Payments to be made from Community account

Nil

Resolved: that the payments were passed for payment: (proposed by Cllr Cook and seconded by Cllr Burge) Unanimous.

6.3) To consider Precept request for 2022 - 2023

This item was deferred until the November Agenda.

7.0 Village issues update

7.1) To receive any update on Village issues – Ward Cllr Fagan would chase up the Highways England contact re A49 highway issues of speeding etc., as raised by a resident previously.

7.2) Parish land – replacing boundary fencing – Previously Cllr Crum had agreed to liaise with the tenant regarding the land and the fencing arrangement. The Chair had spoken to the tenant. There was part of a wall close to the boundary now. The tenant would be requested to liaise with the Lengthsman regarding the temporary fence boundary.

7.3) Self help gritting scheme – the circuit previously gritted by a resident from Little Dewchurch would not be gritted going forward. The item would be removed from the Agenda.

7.4) Green BT box on A49

The Clerk had looked at the box on the A49 (labelled V11) and had contacted BT/Open reach regarding this damaged, and seemingly redundant, box (Job Ref: WN8KLLK89). It was advised at the meeting that there was a further green box that required reporting at the end of Waterloo Lane, Kingsthorpe.

7.5) Update – re speeding enquiries for Tump Lane etc. The reply received from the Highways Safety Advisor to the West Mercia Police in regard to speeding and road use had been circulated. The situation regarding a footpath for Tump Lane was ongoing. The Chair (and Clerk) would draft a response to the Tump Lane resident who had queried the speeding situation. The parish council would be keeping the observations under review.

8.0 Planning Matters

8.1) To consider any planning applications

There were three applications for consideration of comments:

213434 - Bramley Bungalow, Kingsthorpe, Hereford

This was for an exterior access lift. The Parish Council resolved to support the proposals and would request expediency due to extenuating circumstances.

213521 - Damson Croft, Little Birch, Hereford – this was in relation to the conversion of a garage to an external dwelling. The Parish Council resolved to support the application on the conditional recommendation that the converted dwelling could not be sold independently from the original house in the future.

213321 - Land East of Castle Pool Cottage, Little Birch – proposed repositioning of existing access and associated works

“The Parish Council discussed the application for the proposed repositioning of existing access and associated works and resolved to comment as follows:

Although the actual site falls within the parish of Little Birch, the Much Birch Parish Council wishes to comment as a neighbouring parish. The Much Birch Parish Council wish to record their strong OBJECTION to the proposals contained within the planning consultation 213321. The planning proposals have been through a number of iterations, since the outline permission was granted, and now vary materially to what was originally proposed and agreed. There is also no supporting information as to why this application has been made or is necessary. The sacrifice of sections of hedge and replacement by fencing is not acceptable given the previous required commitment to hedgerow retention. The continued removal of portions of hedge reduces the screening of the site and materially alters the street scene. The alteration of the driveway, and access, is also a matter of objection due to the potential for further mature hedgerow destruction. It is also a matter of concern as to how the existing telegraph poles will be potentially moved and relocated due to their current proximity to the proposed works area. No evidence has been provided that this has been agreed with the relevant utility company.”

9.0 Parish Roads and Footpaths

9.1) To note any defects to be reported to Balfour Beatty

- The ongoing issue with erosion and holes at the top of Tump Lane, nearest the A49.
- Thorn, junction of Waterloo Lane, opposite Wrigglebrook Lane the repaired drop had eroded. There was the potential for the road to act like a ramp to possibly tip a vehicle.
- Waterloo Lane – 3 drains in addition to the road junction one blocked
- Wrigglebrook Lane – out of 6 drains in the first 150 metres - at least 3 were blocked. Balfour Beatty or the Lengthsman to clear.
- Finger post had rotted off on path MB1 by entrance to property “Belle Vue”

9.2) To put forward work for the Lengthsman

Drains and general works as required.

9.3) Footpath Officer – to appoint new officer and to receive any update or action points

A new footpath officer had been found. Details of the Footpath Officer “contract agreement” and information would be obtained by the Clerk and sent to the Chair who would liaise with the new FPO and the outgoing FPO regarding handover etc. New FPO details would be published on the website.

10.0 Parishes Newsletter and Much Birch Website

10.1) To consider items suitable for inclusion in the newsletter and on the website plus Twitter. Clerk would send a précis to the Newsletter and would include seasonal details about bonfires etc.

11.0 Matters to be raised on the Agenda for the next meeting

All the usual items would be included. Also to be included – consideration of a footpath/pavement at the Thorn.

12.0 Confirmation of the date of the next Meeting

The next Meeting of the Parish Council would be held on Thursday 4th November 2021, from 7.30pm in the Much Birch Community Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.42pm

Signed:

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Chairman

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Date